

Message

From: Moraff, Kenneth [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=B6170EF3BAEF40C3BDECAB56FD74B07A-MORAFF, KENNETH]
Sent: 10/20/2020 1:32:53 PM
To: R1_WD_Managers_SG [R1_WD_Managers_SG@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: OW-The Morning Insider

From: Varnado, Miriam <Varnado.Miriam@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 9:12 AM
To: Water Program Contact List - Directors <Water_Program_Contact_List__Directors@epa.gov>
Cc: Water Program Contact List - Deputy Directors <Water_Program_Contact_List__Deputy_Directors@epa.gov>; Jones, Erica <Jones.Erica@epa.gov>; Looper, Catherine <Looper.Catherine@epa.gov>; Marcus, Pam <marcus.pam@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: OW-The Morning Insider

Good morning All,

FYI...see below.

Regards,

Miriam

Miriam Varnado

Lead Region Coordinator for the Office of Water
EPA Region 6 (WD) -Water Division
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500,
Dallas, TX 75270-2102

Office: 214-665-7171 | **Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)** | arnado.miriam@epa.gov

From: Lousberg, Macara <Lousberg.Macara@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 7:04 AM
To: Varnado, Miriam <Varnado.Miriam@epa.gov>; Akopian, Natalia <akopian.natalia@epa.gov>; Corona, Joel <Corona.Joel@epa.gov>; Evalenko, Sandy <Evalenko.Sandy@epa.gov>; Gorke, Roger <Gorke.Roger@epa.gov>; Graf, Kate <Graf.Kate@epa.gov>; Gude, Karen <Gude.Karen@epa.gov>; Lousberg, Macara <Lousberg.Macara@epa.gov>; Mahadwar, Gouri <Mahadwar.Gouri@epa.gov>; McMiller, Nettie <McMiller.Nettie@epa.gov>; Rose, Bob <Rose.Bob@epa.gov>; Ruf, Christine <Ruf.Christine@epa.gov>; Trombley, Michael <Trombley.Michael@epa.gov>
Subject: FW: OW-The Morning Insider

From: Fuld, John <Fuld.John@epa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2020 8:04 AM
To: Aguirre, Janita <Aguirre.Janita@epa.gov>; Bertrand, Charlotte <Bertrand.Charlotte@epa.gov>; Best-Wong, Benita <Best-Wong.Benita@epa.gov>; Bravo, Antonio <Bravo.Antonio@epa.gov>; Connors, Sandra <Connors.Sandra@epa.gov>; Drinkard, Andrea <Drinkard.Andrea@epa.gov>; Forsgren, Lee <Forsgren.Lee@epa.gov>; Gilbertson, Sue <gilbertson.sue@epa.gov>; Goodin, John <Goodin.John@epa.gov>; Kramer, Jessica L. <kramer.jessical@epa.gov>; Lalley, Cara <Lalley.Cara@epa.gov>; Lape, Jeff <lape.jeff@epa.gov>; Lippert, Allison <lippert.allison@epa.gov>; Lousberg, Macara <Lousberg.Macara@epa.gov>; McDonough, Owen <mcdonough.owen@epa.gov>; McLain, Jennifer L. <McLain.Jennifer@epa.gov>; Miller, Wynne

<Miller.Wynne@epa.gov>; Nagle, Deborah <Nagle.Deborah@epa.gov>; PerezSullivan, Margot <PerezSullivan.Margot@epa.gov>; Risley, David <Risley.David@epa.gov>; Ross, David P <ross.davidp@epa.gov>; Ruf, Christine <Ruf.Christine@epa.gov>; Sawyers, Andrew <Sawyers.Andrew@epa.gov>; Schollhamer, Mary <Schollhamer.Mary@epa.gov>; Shimkin, Martha <Shimkin.Martha@epa.gov>; Spraul, Greg <Spraul.Greg@epa.gov>; Vazquez, Sharon <Vazquez.Sharon@epa.gov>; Wadlington, Christina <Wadlington.Christina@epa.gov>; Wildeman, Anna <wildeman.anna@epa.gov>

Subject: OW-The Morning Insider



October 20, 2020

NEWS

Insider EPA: EPA Announces Broad Federal Strategy To Reduce Marine Litter Worldwide

EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler has announced the launch of a broad new federal strategy aimed at preventing and reducing marine litter worldwide, with a focus on boosting the capacity of waste management systems and collaborating with the private sector on providing incentives to the global recycling market to minimize waste.

The Palm Beach Post: EPA effort announced to reduce trash in waterways and oceans

BOCA RATON – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced a new federal effort Monday to reduce the 28 billion pounds of trash that reaches the world's waterways and oceans every year.

The Maui News: Lanai Oil agrees to pay \$71,166 penalty for multiple EPA violations

Lanai Oil Co. and the Environmental Protection Agency reached a settlement over violations of the Clean Water Act at Kaunalapau Harbor that resulted in a \$71,166 penalty.

Water Finance and Management: EPA chief announces \$225 million WIFIA loan for Hampton Roads Sanitation District

At a recent event in Suffolk, Virginia, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced a \$225 million Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan to the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD).

FULL ARTICLE

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EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler has announced the launch of a broad new federal strategy aimed at preventing and reducing marine litter worldwide, with a focus on boosting the capacity of waste management systems and collaborating with the private sector on providing incentives to the global recycling market to minimize waste.

During Oct. 19 remarks made in Boca Raton, FL, Wheeler, along with several other federal officials including White House Council on Environmental Quality Chairman Mary Newmayr, announced the publication of “The United States Federal Strategy for Addressing the Global Issue of Marine Litter.” Six federal agencies have signed off on the strategy.

Wheeler said that every year, as much as 28 billion pounds of waste are deposited into the world’s oceans, “harming marine life and coastal economies.” He also noted that marine litter is a high priority for the Trump administration.

“The publication spells out in detail a holistic, nationwide approach to combating marine litter that can be replicated and adapted throughout the world,” he said at the event, which was live-streamed. “The most effective way to combat marine litter is to prevent the litter from entering the oceans in the first place. This means improving waste management and recycling globally.”

He told the audience that the United States “is taking a leadership role in these areas.”

Wheeler said the strategy is rooted in four pillars. First, the federal government plans to build capacity for waste and litter management systems, he said.

Second, it plans to incentivize the global recycling market in partnership with private entities.

Third, it will promote research and development for new technologies and solutions, he said.

And fourth, the United States plans to promote marine litter removal technologies for capture of litter in the oceans as well as rivers and inland water ways.

“The U.S. is committed to implementing groundbreaking programs and financing initiatives around the world that provide methods and tools to countries that are struggling with this problem,” Wheeler said. He added that the U.S. government recognizes it cannot solve marine debris issues alone, and said that is why the strategy promotes collaboration with the private sector and non-governmental organizations to remedy the problem.

Wheeler highlighted EPA’s Trash Free Waters Program, launched in 2013, which works with local stakeholders to help communities address land-based sources of marine litter. Similarly, the agency’s Trash Free Waters International program, begun in 2016, works to assist international communities to address land-based marine litter, the strategy says. The Trump administration has requested an increased budget for these two programs, which would allow the agency to expand the program to Southeast Asia -- the site of the largest source of pollution to oceans, he said.

Wheeler also said that the United States is doing its part, with EPA leading efforts to bolster the U.S. domestic recycling system. “We are doing this by keeping recyclable materials inside the economy, and not floating down our waterways.”

Finally, he highlighted the federal government’s partnership with the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, which he said is key to countering marine litter. According to the strategy, U.S. Agency for International Development is working with the alliance -- an industry-based organization that has committed to invest \$1.5 billion in initiatives to end plastic waste.

The two entities “will deploy innovative, locally appropriate technologies, infrastructure, and business models to improve waste management and recycling in high-source cities,” the strategy says.

Environmentalists’ Concerns

The federal government’s announcement on marine litter comes as environmental groups are sounding the alarm on an expected boom in plastics production over the next several years, as needs in the transportation and other fossil fuel-dependent sectors are expected to decline.

According to investigative reporting done in March titled “Plastic Wars” by NPR and Frontline, “Industry analysts expect oil and gas demands from the chemicals industry will surpass the demand from the transport side in the coming decade. Plastic production overall is now expected to triple by 2050.”

Environmental groups say existing capacity of plastic production already meets consumer demand for essential goods, and no new production facilities should be built.

The Palm Beach Post: EPA effort announced to reduce trash in waterways and oceans

BOCA RATON – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced a new federal effort Monday to reduce the 28 billion pounds of trash that reaches the world’s waterways and oceans every year.

The four-part strategy, which includes open-ended goals such as promoting research and development, also is about bringing together the multiple agencies that address marine litter so that a more overarching clean-up plan can be written, Wheeler said.

“Different agencies have done different things in this space over the years, but we have never addressed it in a comprehensive manner,” Wheeler said after the announcement at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. “Instead of having a one-off, piecemeal approach, we are now all agreeing we will work together to solve the problem.”

With time waning before the Nov. 3 election, the announcement brought several high-ranking Trump administration officials to Boca Raton. In September, President Trump was in Jupiter to announce an extension on banning offshore oil drilling along Florida's coast.

On Monday, in addition to Wheeler, Department of Energy Deputy Secretary Mark Menezes, Mary Neumayr, chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, Deputy National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Administrator Tim Gallaudet, and EPA Region 4 Administrator Mary Walker were in attendance.

U.S. House Rep. Brian Mast, R-Palm City, who has been a supporter of environmental efforts in the Treasure Coast and South Florida, also spoke during the announcement.

Speakers touted programs such as NOAA's Marine Debris Program, which has given \$24 million to remove and research marine debris, and a 2020 award from the EPA of \$7.8 million to 17 recipients along the Gulf Coast to remove and prevent trash in the waterways and Gulf of Mexico.

Part of the new emphasis on marine trash will be overseas, including trying to make it worth it for other countries to have better recycling programs and keep trash out of the water. The EPA said five countries in Asia account for more than half of the plastic trash in the ocean.

Florida Atlantic University President John Kelly, who introduced the speakers, noted how the Boca Raton-based company 4Ocean worked to incentivize ocean cleanup overseas by selling bracelets made of recycled ocean plastic. FAU alumni Alex Schulze and Andrew Cooper began the company after seeing plastic-covered beaches during a Bali surf trip. The duo was lauded in Forbes 2019 "30 under 30" recognition.

The Maui News: Lanai Oil agrees to pay \$71,166 penalty for multiple EPA violations

Lanai Oil Co. and the Environmental Protection Agency reached a settlement over violations of the Clean Water Act at Kaunalapau Harbor that resulted in a \$71,166 penalty.

In announcing the settlement Tuesday, the EPA said it believes the penalty will reduce the risk of oil spills at the Lanai terminal.

"It is critical that companies operating near our waterways develop and follow a spill prevention plan," said EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator John Busterud. *"Our action will help prevent oil spills to Hawaii's harbors and coastal waters."*

The Lanai facility is located on the leeward side about 200 feet from Kaunalapau Harbor. An EPA inspection in November 2018 found that Lanai Oil had violated the Clean Water Act's oil pollution prevention regulations by failing to:

- Review and evaluate the Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure plan at least once every five years.
- Conduct integrity testing of the aboveground storage tanks.
- Permanently close out-of-service aboveground storage tanks.

The EPA said that its oil pollution prevention regulations aim to prevent oil from reaching navigable waters and adjoining shorelines and to ensure containment of oil discharges in the event of a spill. Specific prevention measures include developing and implementing spill prevention plans, training staff and installing physical controls to contain and clean up oil spills.

Paul Oliveira, chief operations officer for Lanai Oil Co., said Friday that *"Lanai Oil Co. is pleased to reach this resolution with our EPA."*

“We appreciate the Environment Protection Agency’s support in helping Lanai Oil make our Lanai Oil terminal safer for the environment,” he said. “Lanai Oil Co. stands in full support in the federal, state and local requirements that protect our community and our environment.”

Water Finance and Management: EPA chief announces \$225 million WIFIA loan for Hampton Roads Sanitation District

At a recent event in Suffolk, Virginia, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced a \$225 million Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan to the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD). This WIFIA loan represents the first loan provided under an agreement that will commit \$1.05 billion in WIFIA assistance to help finance one of the first major water reuse programs on the east coast of the United States.

“EPA has helped finance \$14.5 billion in water infrastructure through the WIFIA loan program to better protect public health and support projects including those that enhance water reuse,” said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. “By supporting projects in Virginia through the Sustainable Water Initiative for Tomorrow (SWIFT) Program, new infrastructure can be built to protect groundwater and save ratepayers money.”

The SWIFT program will use innovative water reuse and advanced water treatment technologies to replenish the overdrawn Potomac Aquifer and restore its water supply. It will implement more than 20 projects across the service area to upgrade existing treatment works, adding advanced water treatment facilities and multiple wells to add drinking water quality SWIFT Water to the stressed Potomac Aquifer. By replenishing the Potomac Aquifer, the program will help restore water supply, prevent saltwater intrusion, and mitigate land subsidence related to aquifer withdrawals in coastal Virginia. The program will also improve the quality of the Chesapeake Bay by reducing surface water discharges by approximately 100 million gallons per day—90 percent of HRSD’s discharge to the Bay watershed.

The sustainability, security and resiliency benefits of this project highlight EPA’s commitments under the National Water Reuse Action Plan. The Action Plan identifies 37 specific actions across 11 strategic themes, including highlighting the potential for WIFIA to help finance water reuse projects. Over the coming months, EPA will be seeking input from stakeholders that will help inform the next iteration of the Action Plan, which is slated for release in Spring 2021.

“Realizing HRSD’s vision that future generations will inherit clean waterways and be able to keep them clean requires significant investment today in clean water infrastructure,” said HRSD Commissioner and Former Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources Molly Joseph Ward. HRSD has spent \$1.64 billion over the past decade and will invest another \$8.47 billion over the next two decades in clean water infrastructure. Clean water is expensive and can only be achieved and maintained through effective partnerships with citizens, non-profits, and government at all levels. Providing low cost loans through the WIFIA program is the federal government’s contribution to clean water in Hampton Roads and we are pleased to be able to partner with them to save Hampton Roads’ ratepayers almost three percent of the total projected investment over the next two decades.”

This project phase will cost \$460 million, and EPA’s WIFIA loan will finance nearly half of that figure. In July 2020, Virginia’s Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund program closed a loan with Hampton Roads Sanitation District to finance \$100 million of the SWIFT Program, its largest loan to date. The remaining project funds will come from revenue bonds. The WIFIA loan will save Hampton Roads Sanitation District an estimated

\$72.4 million compared to typical market financing. Project construction and operation are expected to create 1,400 jobs. EPA and HRSD have entered into a master agreement for future WIFIA loans to support this important project.

WIFIA is providing financial support at a critical time as the federal government, EPA, and the water sector work together to help mitigate the public health and financial impacts of COVID-19. Since the beginning of March 2020, WIFIA has announced eighteen loans and updated five existing loans with lower interest rates. These recent efforts by EPA's WIFIA program will save ratepayers over \$1 billion compared to typical market financing. Since the first WIFIA loan closed in April 2018, EPA has now issued 34 WIFIA loans totaling \$6.7 billion in credit assistance to help finance \$14.5 billion for water infrastructure projects while creating 31,000 jobs and saving ratepayers \$3.3 billion.

John W. Fuld, Ph.D.

U.S. Media Relations Manager, Office of Water
IO Communications Office
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Constitution Ave
Washington DC 20460
Office: 202-564-8847

Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)

fuld.john@epa.gov

nobilis princeps

